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MURPHY CONVENES KATZ, STATE CONSUMER COUNSELS FOR MEETING WITH FTC TO DISCUSS PERSISTENT, ABUSIVE ELECTRICITY RATE HIKES IN CT

WASHINGTON – As a follow up to his call on the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to crack down on abusive electricity rate hikes, **U.S. Senator Chris Murphy (D-Conn.)** will convene a group of consumer representatives from Connecticut and affected neighboring states to meet with the Federal Trade Commission in Washington. Connecticut consumers are overpaying for power by an estimated \$13.7 million a month, and Murphy is pushing for stepped-up federal oversight.

There have been a number of reported instances of abusive rate hikes issued by some independent electrical suppliers in Connecticut. In these instances, electrical suppliers offer power supply contracts with lower rates, but fail to fully disclose the potential for significant rate hikes. Electricity suppliers end up charging some consumers hundreds more than they previously paid other utilities for electricity. The Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority has received over 1,700 complaints from consumers regarding these deceptive practices so far this year.

During today's meeting, Connecticut Consumer Counsel Elin Katz will join her counterparts from Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maine, Maryland and Washington, D.C. to meet with the FTC to discuss what next steps are needed to crack down on this abuse.

"Too many consumers in Connecticut have opted into power supply relationships without proper disclosure of the risks involved and the 'sticker shock' when rates unexpectedly spike," said Murphy. "In a cold-weather, high-cost state like Connecticut, these issues are enormously important. Connecticut state regulators have done a considerable amount of work to crack down on these third-party suppliers, but preventing abusive rate hikes will require a partnership between the federal government and state officials. Organizing this meeting has been a high priority of mine and I'm glad Ms. Katz will be able to share her feedback with federal officials today."

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